



United Jewish Federation®  
OF GREATER STAMFORD, NEW CANAAN AND DARIEN

BETTER TOGETHER

January 2017

Herbert and Sarah M. Gibor  
Reading Partners Program

Dear volunteers and program supporters,

Happy 2017 and Best Wishes to all  
for a Healthy, Happy year filled with good  
times, good friends and good feelings of  
satisfaction.



We got off to a late start this school year as the Jewish holidays ended mid-October and many of our teams didn't start up until the beginning of November.

But by mid-month we were all activated and the program in full gear. We have teams at all 13 Stamford elementary schools and 2 after school teams at the First Presbyterian Church (the Fish Church) and the Stamford YMCA.

Thank you for your robust response to the Reading Attitude Survey; I am grateful for your input and participation in the process. Just last week I received a few more completed surveys so now I will take a closer look at these initial results and work with one of our reading specialists to look at the data. Stay tuned for more feedback on the survey and its results.

We had THE BEST ever response from all of you for the Lord and Taylor charity day that was held in November. We sold a total of 145 tickets for \$5 each and thus collected \$725. That is fabulous! Last year we sold 113 tickets so thanks to all of you for getting the word out and supporting the program. These monies will be used to purchase the books we give out to our program's students at the end year parties. In addition to these initial ticket profits, we will be receiving a check from Lord and Taylor in the next couple months to reflect our share of the store's sales on Charity Day because we sold over 75 tickets. Chairperson Ena Sarkar (Hart School Team Leader) did a stellar job again this year and I know she's going to personally thank you with her own note. THANK YOU, ENA!!!!!!!!!!!!

With warm regards,  
Marlyn

### Happy Hart Workshop Attendees



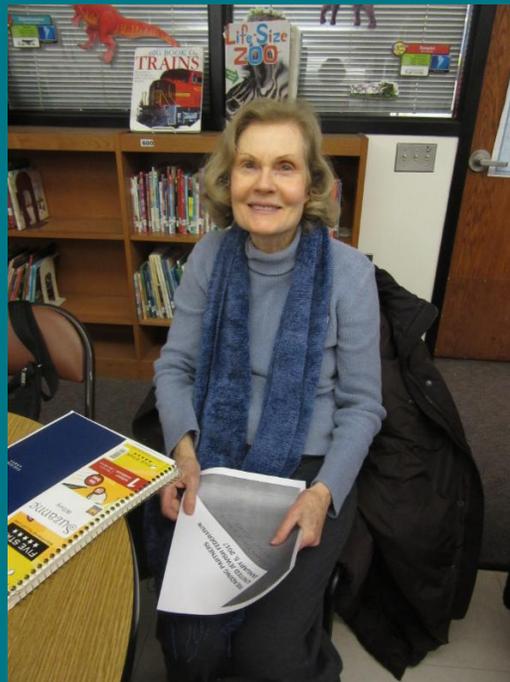
L-R: Ronny Kaplan, Sallie Kuh, Wendy Fitzgerald, Meg Mooar, Carol Dubiel and Harriet Weinstein enjoy each other's company

"Shared Reading: Ripe for Creativity and Engagement with your Student" was the topic at a Reading Partners workshop hosted by Hart Magnet Elementary School on January 5. A special corps of 5th grade students welcomed the volunteers and ushered them into the media center.

Administrative intern Michelle Cain and Reading specialist Maryanne Cortese presented the workshop and delivered very focused strategies for working with emerging readers. The most often repeated strategy included the words: talk, converse and conversation—that is, the value that Reading Partners bring to our experience is that of encouraging emerging readers to talk and use their vocabulary skills.

Principal Linda Darling closed the session and re-iterated the strength of the volunteer-student reader relationship and how impactful each 1/2 hour is, for each and every child.

### Highlighting a Reading Partner with special correspondent Elaine Erichson



Suzanne Wilsey at the Hart Workshop

Suzanne came to Reading Partners 8 years ago when scouting for a program that would combine her love of reading and enjoyment of the company of children. She had previously volunteered with

Kindergarteners through Stamford Achieves and felt she could make a big difference concentrating on the youngest students. She has found Northeast School, and especially her cooperating teacher, Mrs. De Masi, to be very supportive. Suzanne once asked a particularly quiet and shy boy, "Do you like to read?" and his heartwarming answer was "I like to read with YOU!"

Suzanne was certified to teach all subjects in grades K-8 but concentrated on teaching art. She continues to paint, mostly in water colors. And she still loves to read—recent favorites include Phillippa Gregory books, Edward Rutherford's New York and the audio version of The Boys in the Boat.

Suzanne has found the program to be an excellent way to continue teaching as you get

## Let's Talk

Reading with children should feel like a conversation; ask questions and share experiences. Here are some tips from the January Hart School workshop presenters:

1. Ask questions frequently. (as often as one per sentence).  
These questions include: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How & What do you think will happen next?
2. Share experiences. Talk about a memory or thought that the story reminded you about. For example, if a character is going on an adventure, talk with your student about a related adventure or vacation that you or they went on. (Connections strengthen understanding).
3. Talk about new words. It's OK to tell the reader the definition of a word that he or she may not know, but make sure to give examples of how to use the word in a sentence and let the child practice telling you the meaning of the word. Always review new words at least one more time before you move on to the next page.
4. Talk about different endings or events in the story. Ask "What if" questions about character actions and problems in the story. This will help the reader learn about how events earlier in the story will affect events later in the story. For example, "What if the third little pig built his house out of Styrofoam?"



I derive tremendous satisfaction hearing from you and getting occasional visits in the office. It's a good way for me to keep in touch with how things are going. In addition to your amazing team leaders, I am here to offer support and feedback so please don't hesitate to be in touch. Just remember I am part time, so call ahead to ensure I'm here.

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